

A Victorious Life!

Rev. E. J. Pace.

Carlos Maglaya was converted within two months after my arrival upon the field in 1905. I had nothing to do with it, for Mr. Widdoes had been working with him for a long while. I tell his story for what it reveals of the Holy Spirit's work in the lives of Filipino Christians.

Mr. Maglaya was a captain in the army of Aguinaldo, and was the personal guide of the fugitive general when the closely-pursuing American soldiers were hot upon his trail, and led him over the mountains at Tilud Pass, which is a few miles to the north of Sigay. Mr. Maglaya was a man of about forty years of age, I judge, when I first met him. He was a man of great force of character; a leader in his home town, and a man upon whose face the marks of cruelty and hardness were most marked.

Well do I remember the day that I visited Mr. Widdoes in his home in Ago-o. Underneath the house, Mr. Widdoes had provided bamboo benches, and was using the space as a chapel. The few workers that we had at that time were assembled for a conference, and among them was Carlos Maglaya. At the close of the meeting in which Mr. Widdoes, speaking in Spanish, addressed the assembled workers, Carlos came forward with rapid stride to the bench which served as an altar.

To this day memory pictures distinctly the tears streaming down his face as he fairly flung himself on his knees and prayed to God for pardon. His conversion was pronounced, and the genuineness of it evidenced in his immediate determination to preach the gospel. In after years it was my privilege to be associated with Carlos, and well do I remember his earnestness and zeal; the directness of his methods and the fruitfulness of his labors. It would be his custom when preaching among the hills back of Tagudin, to come in to see me at Tagudin. He would say, "Pastor Pace, I am all out of sermons, and would like you to help me prepare more." So we would sit down and spend two or three days writing out sermon outlines, which he would then take as his panoply of warfare back among the hills. There were times when I would accompany him to preach among the Igorotes, and joyful was our fellowship in the Lord.

There was one thing that Carlos would do, and that was to use tobacco. He was very frank in his assertion of innocence of wrong in the use of the weed. Many times I had heart-to-heart talks with him upon that and other subjects, but never could prevail upon him to discontinue smoking. Finally, I said to him, "Carlos, if you are going to smoke, then by all means, do it in my presence rather than behind my back, for to deceive is far worse than to smoke." Years elapsed; I came to America and went back again. Two weeks after my arrival in the La Union, in the little concrete chapel at Cava, there was a dedication. This was Carlos' home town, and of course he was there with all the rest of the members. The little church was crowded to the doors, and many people stood on the outside.

At a meeting immediately preceding the dedicatory service, where the brethren gave their testimonies, Carlos arose to his feet and said in his rapid manner: "Brethren, you know what my life was before I knew Christ. You know how bad and wicked I was, and you know also how changed my life has been since Jesus saved me, but there was one thing that remained, and that was I would continue to smoke. About three months ago it was borne in upon me that I ought to quit this because of the influence my life might have upon others who thought it wrong. I tried hard to stop, but when I failed, I took the matter to the Lord in prayer, and prayed earnestly and He gave me wonderful victory. For three months now I have not touched tobacco, and great is my joy in the Lord."

I have not quoted his words exactly, but this is the substance of what he said. You can imagine my great joy as I heard this splendid testimony of the power of the Spirit of God to continue the work that he begins when the believer accepts Christ as his Lord and Life.

Brother Carlos Maglaya rendered faithful service as evangelist and as pastor for some years both in the southern and northern districts of our Ilocano territory. Finally, when the railway construction in Northern Luzon reached his town he accepted the position as station-master in Cava, and applied for a local relation in his home church, where he has since devotedly assisted his pastor. When his pastor was absent, attending the Union Theological Seminary in Manila, Carlos would assist in supplying the pulpit, in the Sunday-school work, and in the meetings in the villages. His messages are full of power. He helps support every progressive movement among his people.

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